



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

# AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

**MEETING DATE:** April 20, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Wolf Depredation Advisory Committee

### **BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:**

In December, the Board had an introductory discussion about the possibility of establishing a Wolf Depredation Advisory Committee.

The State's Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance program is administered by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA). It provides pass-through grants to counties to establish and implement county wolf depredation compensation programs.

Currently, 17 counties in Oregon have wolf programs/committees, including Baker, Crook, Curry, Douglas, Grant, Jackson, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, Wheeler. Historical requests and awards from ODA's grant program are included in the Board's materials. Not all counties with wolf programs / committees submit for compensation each year.

### **Local Impacts**

ODA's Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance Grant Program complements and supports Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Wolf Conservation and Management Plan by working to proactively minimize wolf-livestock conflict and assist livestock producers experiencing wolf-related livestock losses.

Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) staff have shared that there are currently no known wolf packs or areas of consistent wolf activity within Deschutes County, but the occurrence of confirmed sightings of transient and dispersing wolves has increased in recent years, as it has throughout most of Eastern Oregon.

### **Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance Program**

The State requires that counties establish a wolf depredation compensation committee before a grant application is submitted. County advisory committees must include:

- (i) One county commissioner;
- (ii) Two members who own or manage livestock; and
- (iii) Two members who support wolf conservation or coexistence with wolves.
- (iv) Two county business representatives

Participating counties contribute an amount of money equal to 10% of the allowable expenditures necessary to implement the county program during the calendar year.

Once a committee is established, counties must establish rates of compensation. Compensation rates from Wallowa County are included as a sample. Requests can include:

- Compensation for residents who have livestock or working dogs that are killed or injured due to wolf depredation.
- Financial assistance intended to assist residents in implementing livestock management and/or nonlethal wolf deterrent techniques designed to discourage wolf depredation of livestock.
- Compensation for residents who have livestock or working dogs that are missing due to wolf depredation.

### **Options for Board Consideration**

1. Status quo – Do not move forward with establishing a Wolf Depredation Advisory Committee.
2. Direct staff to prepare a resolution for Board consideration and possible adoption that would create a Wolf Depredation Advisory Committee and associated By-Laws.
3. Revisit the discussion at a later date.

### **Conclusion**

Staff seeks Board direction on the potential creation of a Wolf Depredation Advisory Committee.

### **BUDGET IMPACTS:**

*Grant funds have not been included in the FY 2023 budget.*

### **ATTENDANCE:**

*Whitney Hale, Deputy County Administrator*